30/28-004

The Bendigo Advertiser

No. 30,394 (Registered at General Post Office, Melbourne, for transmission by post as a Newspaper) WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1953 This newspaper is a subscriber to the Australian Associated Press, which provides the overseas news in this issue PRIC

INDIAN STUDIES OUR AGRICULTURE

"Advertiser" Photo.

To further his studies in rural production and farm management Mr. Kamal Joshi, of Bombay, is touring with the Ferguson System of Mechanised Farming unit while on vacation from Dookie Agricultural College. He was in the team that demonstrated latest methods of mechanised farming at a field day at Epsom yesterday.

30128-005

So what became of the Auk? 50

NEWS that the Queen is to visit Morocco in October calls to mind a memorable encounter reported by a friend of Mandrake who was there recently. Sitting in a favourite cafe on the Avenue Mohammed V in Marrakesh he became aware of a very tall, very old gentleman, eyeing him from a table in the corner. The old gentleman did not speak to him, but watched him warily for a while and then left.

Next day he was there again, and this time my friend heard him passing the time of day in French that had a strong English accent with a group of extremely deferential Moroccans.

It was a Monday, and it happened that my friend had with him a copy of the previous day's *Sunday Telegraph*, brought to him by a businessman who had arrived direct from London overnight. When the old gentleman began eyeing him again, Mandrake's friend offered him the newspaper. The following conversation ensued:

Old gentleman: "Who are you, Sir?" Mandrake's friend gave him his name.

Old gent: "Are you a reporter, Sir?" "No Sir."

Old gent: "Do you know me, Sir?" "I regret Sir, that I do not."

Old gent: "My name, Sir, is Auchinleck. I will take your newspaper."

Mandrake's friend could not conceal his astonishment, and Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, aged 97, smiled with satisfaction. "You thought I was dead," he said.

Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, as Eighth Army men will remember him.

It transpires that the Field Marshal has lived in Marrakesh for almost 20 years. His Moroccan friends say that he has become more and more disaffected with the British Establishment, never having fully recovered from his dismay at having been removed by Churchill from his wartime Middle East command in favour of Montgomery.

Two British links remain, however. Once a year—on the Queen's birthday—a diplomat from our Embassy in Rabat calls on the Field Marshal and presents him with flowers. And the British garrison in Gibraltar maintains a series of corporal drivers, on six-month secondments, to drive the old soldier about Marrakesh in his rather battered car.

Field Marshals never retire, and so technically Sir Claude is still on the active list. He was ADC General to King George VI for several years, as well as having been Supreme Commander in India and one of the Viceroy's War Council.

It seems probable that if the Queen were to visit Marrakesh, where King Hassan of Morocco and his brother Moulay Abdullah have some of their grandest palaces, in the shadow of the Atlas mountains, she would wish to see her oldest Field Marshal.

Sir Claude's Moroccan friends are not sure how he would react. One of them told Mandrake's friend on the telephone the other day: "Of course, he wouldn't be disrespectful to your Queen, but he will not get dressed up for anything these days, and he won't wear a tie. . . . But if the Queen went along to the cafe, he'd be pleased to see her. . . ."

Sir Claude visits the cafe—which, in respect for his privacy, I forbear to name—every morning. He is known as *Monsieur Le Général*. But his Moroccan friends have only the vaguest idea as to his career as a soldier. In their eyes, his greatest distinction is that he knew de Gaulle.